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MARCH, 1960

# *Shoptalker*

THE MAGAZINE OF PARKER PEN EMPLOYEES



# Shoptalker

March, 1960  
VOL. XVI No. 1

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Janesville, Wisconsin — Printed in U.S.A.



Member of the International Council of  
Industrial Editors and the Wisconsin  
Industrial Editors Association



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COVER: In the past decade many things have been created at Parker and many things have been photographed. In the months of 1960, Shoptalker will select the best pictures of the decade of the Fifties for its covers. It seems fitting that this series should begin with that which was the beginning of the last decade for Parker and has shaped a new era in company history. Pictured on our cover is a portion of the structural steel skeleton of Arrow Park.

Credits: Cover Picture by Wayne Fuller. Pictures on pages 7, 8, 10, 11 by Rex Photo. Page 5 photo by Helgesen.

This is my work; my blessing, not my doom;  
Of all who live, I am the one by whom  
This work can best be done in the right way.

Henry Van Dyke  
1862-1933

# Fairness is Key to New Office Wage Plan

When Parker Pen set about the task of devising a new office wage payment plan, those responsible had one thought in mind; whatever the program, it must be fair to the individual. They sought a plan which would attract top quality people to every job, one which would be easily communicated and understood, and one which would continue the company reputation as "a good place to work."

The goal was not easily attainable. A committee of two men and two women at first reviewed the established program, wading through more than 150 separate job classifications, pin-pointing deficiencies, and noting inequities. In doing so, they gave thought to revitalizing this program as an alternative to breaking with the past and setting out anew.

The decision to break with tradition came out of visitations to other companies and a thorough study of an extensive employe survey within the Parker offices itself. At other firms, the committee examined systems, pay ranges, hiring policies, job descriptions, supervisor training and methods of communicating these programs.

They compared these findings with national, state, and local computations regarding pay rates and found norms acceptable to Parker.

Next, they asked about 280 employes to fill out a questionnaire regarding their jobs. Employes described such things as their daily, regular weekly and occasional duties and the time allotted to each. They told what skills and abilities they felt were required for their job, the most

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important aspect of their work, and the decisions they were called upon to make. With these and more, they added unusual features of their work and the length of time they had been at their present job.

Supervisors were asked to fill out similar questionnaires regarding the jobs under their direction.

From previous investigations, the committee had succeeded in reducing the number of job classifications from a cumbersome 150 to a more realistic 40. Individually, they attempted classifying into these 40 each of the jobs described in a questionnaire. Then, in meetings, they compared their efforts. And finally, after months of tedious work, they had succeeded in writing an adequate job description for each of the 40.

Out of these meetings, also, the committee developed six separate classifications into which the 40 descriptions were grouped. First was Classification 1 with one job description, that of Office Clerk. Highest was Classification 6, containing the singular position of Secretary II.

Harking back to their prime objective of fairness to the individual, the committee examined the existing hourly rates of every employe in the office. They found that quite a number of employes were currently being paid a rate which was under that prescribed by the higher standards of the new plan for their classification. When the plan was introduced, these people received increases which brought them into line with the new rates. However, those found to be above the prescribed maximum rate, instead of being reduced were allowed to continue at that rate. These above-maximum individuals can, under the program, receive an increase in wage only through attaining a job with a higher classification.

The program, now introduced, has but another phase to be instituted before it is complete. Part two of this article will take up the methods and procedures to be followed in performance reviews and merit wage adjustments.

In all, the new program gave the company and its employes a plan wherein the work, itself, is given a classification and a wage scale. The key to classification is fundamental. As the work requires less supervision, becomes more complex and requires more responsibility, judgment and experience on the part of the individual, the wage scale for that work is increased.

Length of service with Parker Pen does not enter into consideration in the classification of a job. Employes with long service records receive reward through a multitude of fringe benefits, among them longer vacations and increased sick pay.

Thus, the pureness of the program is best outlined by its basic philosophy: "Jobs requiring about the same degree of skill, experience, responsibilities, learning time and supervision are included in the same classification although they may have different titles and include dissimilar work and duties." Henry Van Dyke's expression, "Of all who live, I am the one by whom this work can best be done in the right way," is an attitude which can flourish in the atmosphere created by the new Office Wage Payment Plan.

## Serious Ones and Four-Way Stretch

What follows here was written by Richard W. Holznecht for the "year book" of the 36th Advanced Management Program group at the Harvard Business School. Holznecht, International Director of Advertising and Public Relations, was one of that group. The 37th AMP class is now in session and among its members is Robert Burmeister, Assistant Treasurer.



Richard W. Holznecht

The Advanced Management Program is an exercise in elasticity. The AMP-man devotes thirteen weeks to taking previous experience and convictions and stretching them as far as possible in all directions. The process can be enriching and hazardous. (He risks loss of such standard business equipage as arbitrariness, prefabricated solutions and tunnel vision.) It's something of a problem in saturation, too. After all, how much added substance can be quickly poured into the vessel that is the human cranium?

As might be expected, the 36th AMP group brought skullsfull of special information to the Harvard Business School. Specialists—136 of them—flowed in from every phase of a hundred different types of business enterprises from all corners of the U.S.A. Representatives of the Military and AMP participants from foreign lands completed the mixture.

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Average age: 44, but the very heterogeneity of the group forestalled any further averages or means. As in 35 previous sessions, the abiding characteristic was indeed variation.

Very early in the program, too, it became clearly evident that the 36 AMP-men had come to work. An introspection and seriousness of purpose cropped up in the way the men studied, in the way they discoursed, in the way they dedicated rare leisure hours to serious purpose. An evaluation of the time frame of this group's personal and professional background provided something of a clue to this special dedication. Here was a group that entered the world's business community in the stringent times of the great depression, only to be tested and tempered again by the greatest of the world's conflicts. If this was an assemblage with a no-nonsense attitude and methods to match, doubtless it could be attributed to the environment and times which had fostered and enveloped it. This is not to say that the men of 36 were a grim and humorless lot. Boston, its historical and contemporary diversions, were explored. Seafood and Freedom Trail and that most enigmatic specimen, the black-stockinged Bohemian coed (fully equipped with bearded escort) came in for fair assessment. And outlanders were witness to the cheerless spectacle of deemphasized Ivy-style athletics on the Soldiers Field greenward. But by and large 36 AMP evolved as cerebration and chastity on the Charles.

The Advanced Management Program of the Harvard Business School saw its inception in World War II as a war production training effort. When the war ended, a call arose for its continuation on a deeper, peacetime basis. Today, it stands as a tightly knit 13-week course of lectures, dialectics and study of the key elements that contribute to the business scene. The curriculum is formally labeled as follows: Business Policy, Administrative Practices, Cost and Financial Administration, Marketing Administration, Labor Relations, and Business and the World Society.

A most important segment of the course remains unstructured. That is the continuous interplay of ideas, practices and creeds of the various and varying personalities who gather and comprise AMP. It is an abrasive, humbling and helpful experience to arrive at AMP with a full portfolio of opinions and personal experiences, only to find that they are quite in opposition to those of your fellows, men who must be accepted too for the skilled practitioners that they are. Every member had to realize quickly that here in the Athens of America, where the ubiquitous admonition is "Veritas", one person often holds only a single piece of the truth, and that perspective is a many splendored and omni-directional affair. Even for the brainy, the experienced and the serious that can be an elasticizing experience. And so it was.

## *Eversharp's Mr. Brewer*

New York born Richard H. Brewer's migration to Australia took him through several organizations including the United States Army. After a decade of permanent residence it is safe to assume that he prefers Australia's near-three-million square miles to New York's 315. And, too, it must be assumed that his position as Director and General Manager of Eversharp Australia Pty. Ltd. affords a measure of comfort.



**Richard H. Brewer**

Brewer's first venture into the Pacific took him to the Guggenheim Tin Mines in Malaya with IBM. When the Japanese invaders struck Malaya, Brewer packed his bags and went to Java where he enlisted with the U. S. forces stationed there. Later, he was transferred to Gen. MacArthur's staff in Australia as a public relations officer. It was during his three years in Australia that Brewer met and married Miss Ilma Mary Pidgeon.

At the end of that time, the war carried him to New Guinea and on to the Philippines. When the fighting was over, Brewer returned to his bride and took up the position of general manager of Plyfiber Ltd., in Sidney. In August of 1959, he accepted his present post with Eversharp of Australia.

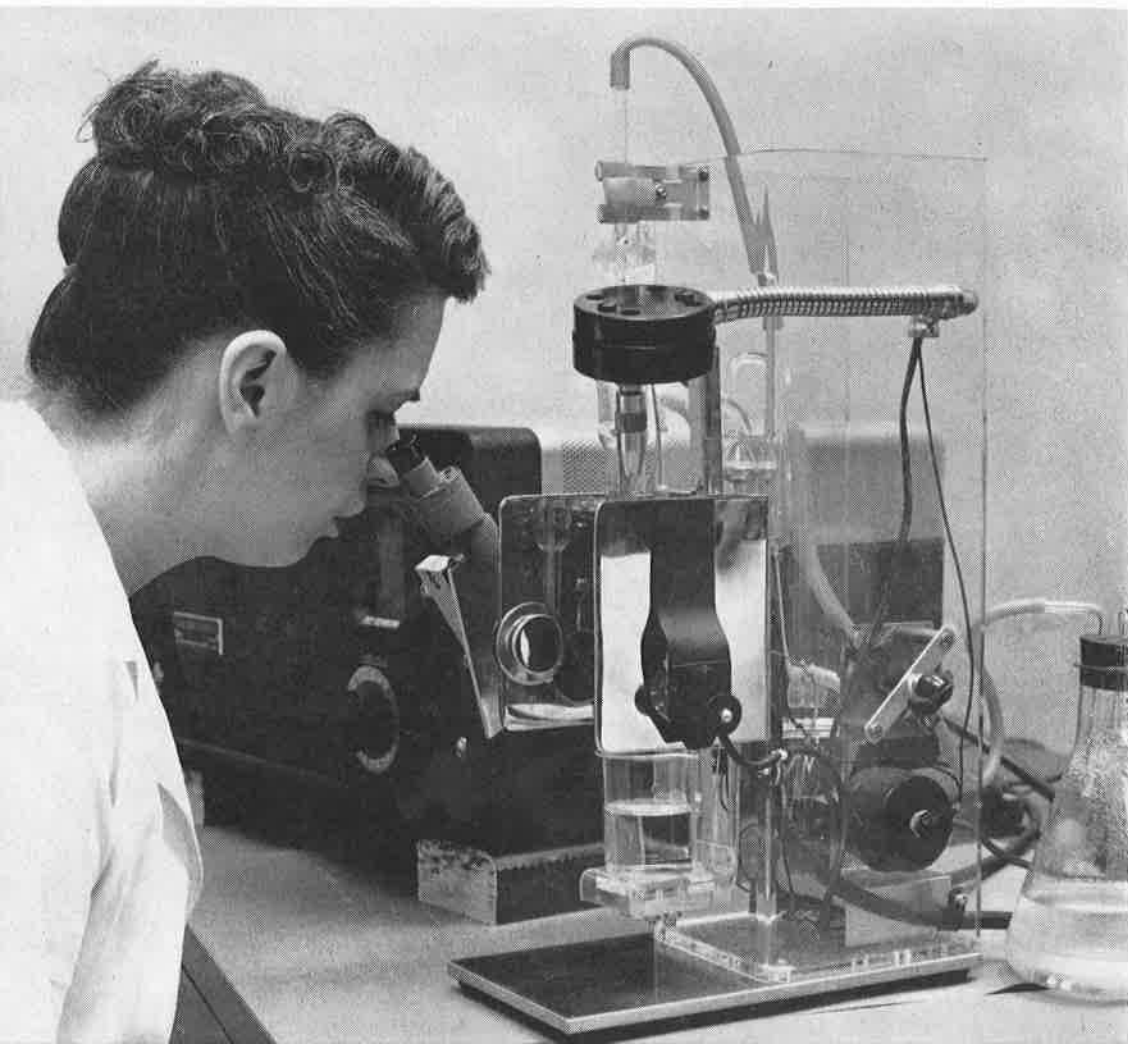
The Eversharp company occupies 10,000 square feet of space in the industrial section of Sidney. Its 40 to 50 employes manufacture, assemble and sell Eversharp ball point pens to all of Australia.

The ball point and the Eversharp pen in particular enjoy good reputations among Australia's consumer public. As a result, the company's products hold a position near-equal to that of Parker pens in the market. Its line includes all Eversharps sold in this country and also a few models developed independently to satisfy Australian consumers.



# Super-Sensitive Tools Keep Parker Tops

A particle counter used by Parker Researchers takes on a Rube Goldberg appearance to the uninitiated. In simple explanation, the electronic component in the background records with almost infallible accuracy the number of particles in a given amount of liquid set in the apparatus in the foreground. Jane Cummings is using a microscope to inspect the work of the counting device.



SEVERAL weeks ago, astronomers made the startling discovery that water vapor existed in the atmosphere of the planet Mars. This new knowledge touched off much speculation concerning life on our neighboring planet.

It would seem that equipment used in astronomical sciences would be far removed from the writing instrument business, but this is not the case. In the laboratories of Parker's Product Planning Division, researchers make daily use of a piece of equipment not at all dissimilar from that which discovered the presence of water vapor in the atmosphere of Mars. It is called a Spectrophotometer. Its job is to "fingerprint" chemical compounds.

In the equipment, radiant energy passing through the substance under study is measured, thus determining its chemical makeup. Radiant energy in this case is that which is popularly called "light", ultra violet, infra red, and the entire visible rainbow, violet to red. With additional accessories, the equipment could put x-ray radiance and even atomic radiance to use in analysis.

What results when a material is "peered" into by Spectrophotometer is a lengthy, measured graph which to the trained eye is a detailed description of the chemicals contained in a compound, and their amounts. In some cases the equipment is capable of narrowing the field of choice only to two or three chemicals in a given family. But tests for these are simple and can be quickly accomplished.

Certainly, it is reasonable to conclude that any good chemist, given an ample supply of test tubes, could determine in time the chemical construction of a particular material and make comparisons between it and another similar substance. But this is a waste of the intelligence required of a good chemist. He is better employed in basic research and the Spectrophotometer frees him for this work.

The Spectrophotometer gives Parker researchers an edge. They can study and map for the record the slightest chemical change which may take place as materials like plastic or ink dyes age. And, because the equipment makes a permanent graph, chemical comparisons can be quickly and simply done by laying the latest graph over the original study. Differences in line are immediately noted, indicating chemical change which has taken place.

Another spectacular tool employed in Product Planning has its origins in the medical profession. This is a device which counts particles in a liquid. It has long been used to tally the number of human blood cells in a given amount of blood.

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Its industrial application is counting particles in fountain pen ink to determine accurately the solubility of dyes or the amount of contamination in a given quantity of ink. It is capable of indicating the number of undesirable particles according to their size and distribution.

In process, ink is diluted down to a point where its color is undetectable. Water used for diluting must be run through a special filter. Ordinary tap water is described by researchers as "far too dirty". The equipment is so sensitive that invisible particles in tap water will throw off accurate results in count.

Here again, humans are capable, with the use of a microscope, of counting particles in ink. But this is a tedious, time-consuming job and time, said Ben Franklin, is money.

Not all highly sensitive testing equipment is confined to research laboratories. At Arrow Park, the Inspection Department employs a device which accurately measures down to one millionth-of-an-inch the roundness of a single T-Ball. After mounting a T-Ball in the machine, a small stylus pricking out of the device circles the ball, "feeling" any deviation from a perfect circle and drawing a chart of it. Deviations felt by the stylus can be magnified from 200 to 20,000 times for purposes of charting. The closer a ball is to absolute round, the greater must be the magnification in order to detect slight deviation.

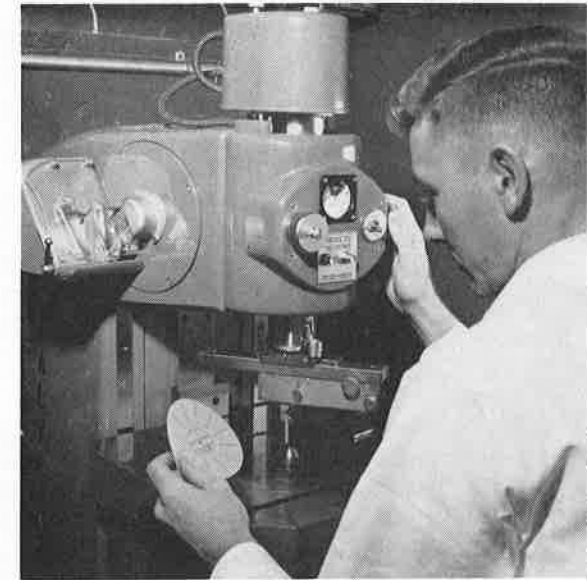
Lab Technician Barbara Wanke is shown here at the controls of an Instron tensile testing machine. Incongruous with its size is its capacity of applying as little as one twenty-five thousandths of a pound pressure.

Wayne Fuller works at one of two

units which make up Parker's spectrophotometric equipment. The device draws a graph of the chemical makeup of a particular compound and is so sensitive that it will even analyze the chemistry of the air surrounding it.



Quality control over an object as tiny as a T-Ball in the point of the Parker T-Ball Jotter ball pen is intricate work. It is accomplished with a device which calculates the roundness of a ball down to one-millionth of an inch. Larry Pierce, shown here, is about to place a paper disc in the machine on which will be recorded the results of an inspection.



Balls to be measured must be thoroughly washed and dried before measuring can be accurately accomplished. Even slight expansion caused by sunlight striking the side of a ball can throw-off effective measurement substantially.

In aligning the mechanism, an absolute sphere is provided by the English firm which makes the equipment. Made of glass, it resembles the type of lens incorporated in the flashlights of 20 years ago, but many more times as smooth. The device is so sensitive that even a fingerprint left on the surface of the glass will be measured and charted.

Instron, a tensile testing device used in the Plastics Laboratory, is still another example of supreme sensitivity. The machine can exert either push or pull, or combinations of both, on an object in any degree from the caress of one twenty-five thousandths of a pound or a brutal 10,000 pounds. Researchers can program in advance the type of test to be conducted by the machine and leave it to do its work. When the part under examination breaks down, the machine automatically shuts off, having drawn an accurate chart of all that occurred during its operation. Its sensitivity necessitates that it be operated in a temperature and humidity controlled room.

There are many more unique tools used by the people who plan and make Parker products. All are present on the Parker scene for one reason alone. That is this: To make the best writing instruments possible, it must be within our means to determine down to a millifact what is second best.



## Sales Forecast—What is it Where does it come from?

by John W. Dawdy

The Sales Forecast is a pivotal point in the administration of the Parker organization as it is in any company having a manufactured product to sell. Like Einstein's Theory of Relativity, the Sales Forecast is universally acknowledged but not generally understood. In this space I shall attempt to draw a recipe for the corporate pie we call Parker's Sales Forecast.

It is something of a pie in the sense that it is portioned out to compute allowable market costs, production levels, cash receipts, salesmen's quotas, and realistic inventories. The bigger the pie, the larger will be these portions. And, inversely, when the sales forecast goes down in volume, so must these expenditures.

In arriving at a sales forecast our sales divisions must give careful consideration to consumer purchasing power, that percentage of total consumer income that can and probably will be spent. From experience, we have established a correlation between population, retail sales, per-capita disposable income and anticipated Parker sales. This has been translated into a table that shows, by state and by county the approximate percentage of every dollar of per capita income we can reasonably expect to be spent on Parker products. We call these tables the Parker Buying Power Index.

The Parker Buying Power Index might be likened to the pan for our corporate pie. The sales volume forecasted must reasonably fit the facts contained in the Parker Buying Power Index.

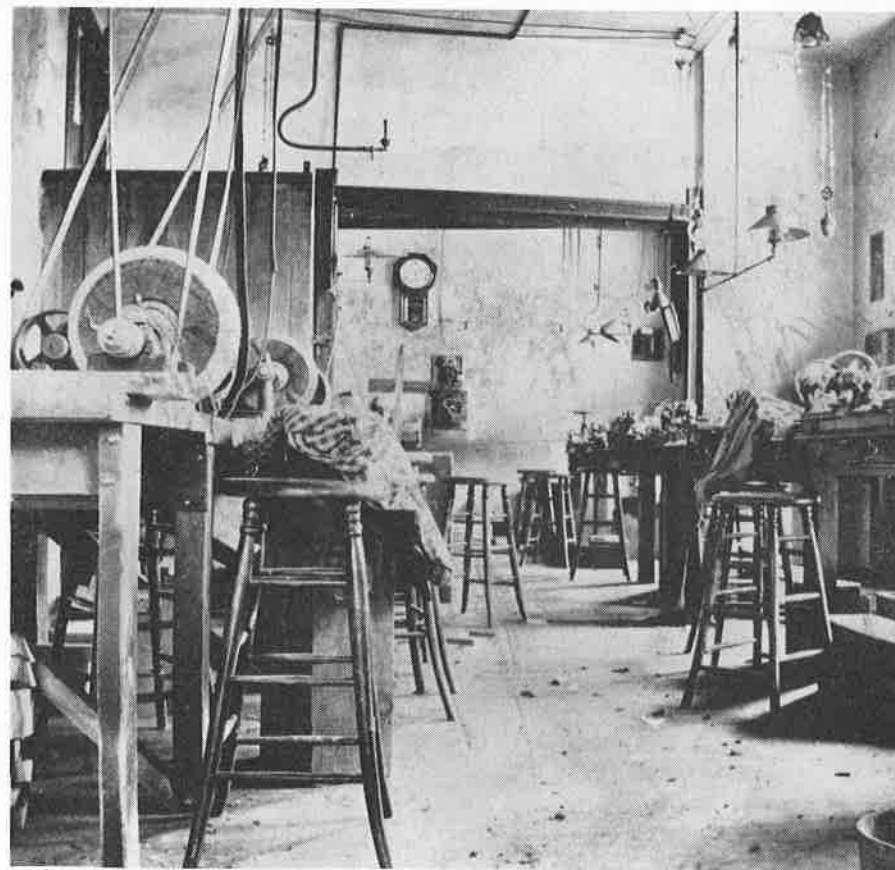
Producing a sales forecast would be a simple task if it ended with the Parker Buying Power Index. But like Grandma's pie recipe, there are pinches of this and that which have their effects in the end product.

Condiments which add accuracy to the Sales Forecast are all considered. They are such things as planned intensity of our product promotional efforts, the general economic condition of the country, dealer inventories, dealer and consumer psychology, and, of course, our competition. These are external factors. Added to these are such internal ingredients as new product forecasts, emphasis on increased sales effort, and our current sales trend.

Lastly, carrying out our analogy of the sales forecast pie, our figures are slowly baked in the heat of management discernment. In this, the sum total of individual and collective experience and judgment are brought to bear. The resulting financial predication, as near sound as is humanly possible, is an absolute necessity in the touch and go economics of a highly competitive business.

## *Over the Shoulder*

Remember the good old days? This picture takes one back to the atmosphere people worked in in the good old days. Those who daily report to the air conditioned climate and modern facilities of Parker's Arrow Park plant would not choose to return to the early years of Parker's history. The rooms shown here, we are told, are in the present Elks Club above the Myers theater. Complete facilities for production of the Parker pen of the period are shown in this photograph.





## The Bishop's Other Hat

This is a love story. It is a tale about pretty Carolyn and her handsome Airman, David. It happened somewhat over a year ago and is an episode in human experience which, although repeated many times with different casts of characters, has ingredients which are unique and give the story an O. Henry ending.

Carolyn is the daughter of Willard Shingleton, Parker Account Manager in Salt Lake City, an excellent salesman, a devout member of the Church of Latter-Day Saints, and a devoted father. At 19, Carolyn was deeply in love with David Peterson, longtime close friend, then, as now, wearing Air Force blue. On his first furlough, David asked Carolyn to marry him. Their parents, as parents generally do, urged patience.

One night Willard returned home about

11:30. The house was ablaze with lights and inside he found that the impetuosity of love had won out over patience. The home was readied for a wedding. Willard resigned himself to the event, taking the only choice open to him since Ward Bishop Burt Price who stood there before him had been kept waiting some time for Willard's arrival. Besides, paternal objection at this late hour might have taxed a close friendship between Willard and the Bishop, a man who shared some of Willard's prime interests.

And so, the wedding proceeded, a bit later than planned by bride and bridegroom, but nonetheless touching, exciting, solemn, beautiful, with Bishop Burt Price officiating. Burt Price, good friend, Ward Bishop by appointment of church hierarchy, and sole representative in the Salt Lake City region of the W. A. Sheaffer Pen Company.

David Peterson



Carolyn Shingleton



past years employees of The Parker Pen Company have been champions in a particular field at one time or another and have gained the right to compete even further. There aren't that many people who have accomplished this that would tend to break Parker—and it would seem that a few dollars could be set apart to help them with expenses and provide some advertising for Parker by giving them an outfit to fit the particular sport concerned. Needless to say if the person or persons were ever to hit the jackpot by winning a large victory, Parker would certainly reap its rewards many times over. This has been discussed in the past and I certainly think that Parker should give some strong consideration on this subject.

**Reply:** The company has for a good number of years contributed to the support of athletic activities through annual gifts of \$500 to the Parker Athletic Association. While it is true that a small amount of public notice comes to the company when individual employees excel in a particular sport, participation in sports activities outside the area of the Parker Athletic Association is of individual concern and therefore is unrelated to company policies and programs.

**Question:** How long does it take to get my first Social Security check after I file my application?

**Reply:** There is no telling exactly. It is necessary for Social Security officials to obtain a record of your earnings. This takes a week or more. Simultaneously other proofs and information required is obtained and then a determination is made and forwarded to the payment center for review. The entire procedure takes a month to three months before the first check is received.

**Question:** Regarding the office, what determines a collection? They tell me that if you are fired you do not qualify for a collection. To put it nicer, if you are laid off you do not qualify for a collection. (The girls that are pregnant are laid off after the completion of the 4th month—please explain how they are allowed a collection.) There have been instances where a girl has worked here 12 years and for some reason has been let go. She does not get a collection. But still by the same token, some girl here a very short time, probably a year is leaving for pregnancy. She has a collection. If they can't have fair rules, why don't they stop collections entirely.

**Reply:** Only rarely is an employe fired from employment with The Parker Pen Company. This only occurs when there is serious reason warranting such drastic action. Employes are laid off because of lack of work for them to do or when pregnancy makes continued work impossible or impractical. The company makes it a policy to post a notice on the bulletin boards, for employes with one or more years of service, reporting the fact of personal illness, death in the immediate family, termination or other special circumstances. The bulletin is posted to communicate these facts and is in no way construed as an official order that a collection be made for the employe in question. Contributions made for the benefit of fellow workers are strictly a matter of individual concern and judgment.

**Question:** Why doesn't Parker have a fund set aside for athletes of The Parker Pen Company? Several times in the

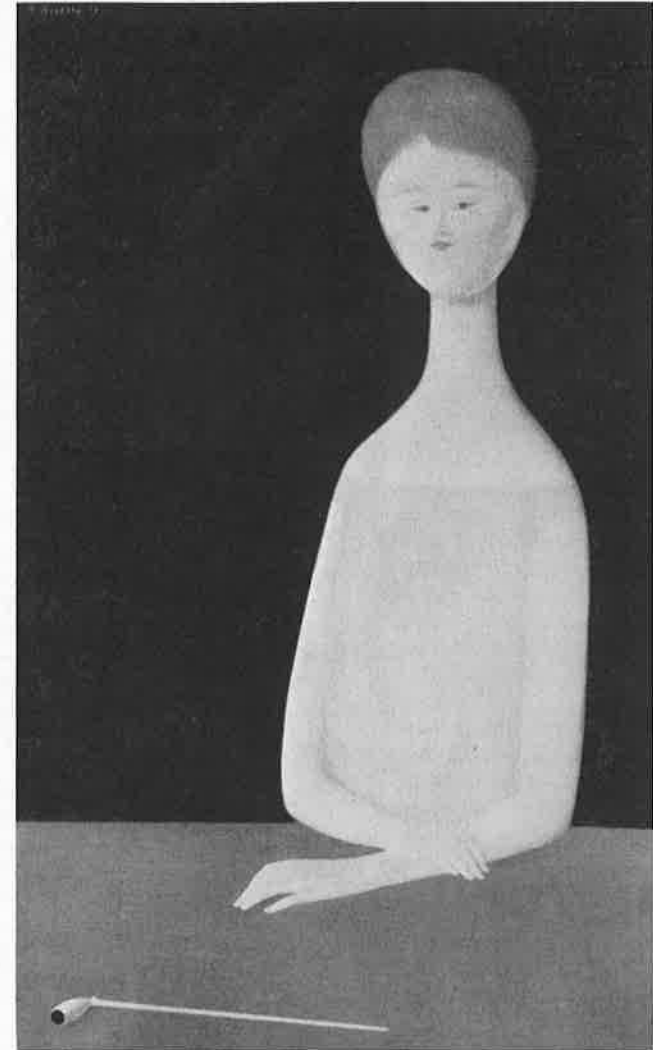
**Editors Note:** Don't forget to drop your questions in your nearest Party Line Box.



*From the library of the  
Pen Collectors of America*



*Support the hobby.  
Join today!*



This painting, titled "Portrait of a Woman" is one of 64 in the Parker Exhibition of Contemporary Italian Art which is currently touring elite department stores throughout the U. S. The artist is 41-year-old Antonio Bueno, of Florence. Our next issue will feature other outstanding paintings contained in the collection.